**Dying Cloud Mistakenly Gives Users Three Days to Save Data**

* By [Klint Finley](http://www.wired.com/wiredenterprise/author/kfinley/), 07.10.13

Cloud computing carries certain risks, just like every other technology.

One of the biggest is that your cloud provider will suddenly disappear, taking your data and applications with it. Customers of the cloud database outfit MyRedis know this first hand — and they know it all too well. On Tuesday, the company announced it had been acquired by competitor [Garantia Data](http://garantiadata.com/), and it told users they had just three days to move their data from MyRedis servers onto machines run by Garantia.

Fortunately, the deadline was a mistake. Customers actually have until the end of July to migrate their data. “The original date came from an email I wrote when we were finalizing the details of the acquisition last month,” says MyRedis co-founder Miles Smith. “Unfortunately, I didn’t catch the mistake until the site was up.”

Although it was just a mix-up, the incident illustrates the need to have a backup plan in place in case of a cloud server outage. There’s been quite a bit of consolidation in the cloud market lately — such as Rackspace’s acquisition of ObjectRocket or CenturyLink’s acquisition of AppFog — and MyRedis probably won’t be the last cloud startup to wind down its operations on short notice.

But story of MyRedis also provides some insight into why startups go away, even when they appear to be doing well on the surface.

Smith was an avid player of the online game Minecraft before co-founding MyRedis. He helped start the [Minecraft Forums](http://www.minecraftforum.net/) and [Minecraft Wiki](http://www.minecraftwiki.net/wiki/Minecraft_Wiki) sites, which sold to [Curse](http://www.curse.com/) in 2011. Last year, Smith decided to use the money he made from those sales to start a Redis hosting compay.

Redis is an open source non-relational, or NoSQL, database. Unlike other popular NoSQL databases, such as MongoDB and Hbase, the focus of Redis is not on big data but on small data that needs to be accessed quickly. Smith had used Redis to manage frequently changing lists of Minecraft servers, and he says many MyRedis customers run gaming servers and use Redis to keep track of player scores and other data that needed to be updated and accesses frequently.

But MyRedis ran into trouble before it even launched. Last year, Smith’s original co-founder quit the company and moved to New Zealand to pursue a dream job. Smith, a developer, suddenly needed to handle both the technical side of the company and the business side. He ended up bringing in a new lead developer: Jacob Jervey, who had previously co-founded a Minecraft server hosting company called Brohosting. Even though Jervis wasn’t actually there at the start of the company, Smith considered him a founder.

Jervey took over the technical side, and Smith focused on business. They launched the service earlier this year, and soon, they were landing customers and making revenue. Then, a few weeks ago, Jervey disappeared, Smith says. Smith was based in Seattle, but Jervis was based in Florida. “There was no way to get a hold of him. It was around the time tropical storm Andrea hit,” Smith says. But after over a week with no communication, Smith fired him.

Smith was then running the whole operation himself, handling development, operations, and customer support. Money was running out. Smith says funded the whole operation out of his savings and never took any outside investment. “I had the money to either support my family the way I want to, or take care of the customers the way I wanted to,” he says. “Not both.” He decided the best course of action would be to sell the company to a buyer that would be better able to take care of the customers.

Smith says Garantia Data has acquired all rights to MyRedis, but he won’t be joining Garantia. He will migrate data from MyRedis to Garantia for any customer who asks, but says most customers will want to handle the migrations on their own.

He’s not sure what he’s going to do next, but he says he learned when to quit. “There’s no point in going down with a dying ship,” he says. “Especially if I’m the one causing it to die.”